



Billing Code 4310–55

DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR

Fish and Wildlife Service

[FWS–HQ–ES–2015–N169]

[4500030113]

Information Collection Request Sent to the Office of Management and Budget (OMB) for Approval; Policy for Evaluation of Conservation Efforts When Making Listing Decisions (PECE)

AGENCY: Fish and Wildlife Service, Interior.

ACTION: Notice; request for comments.

SUMMARY: We (U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service) have sent an Information Collection Request (ICR) to OMB for review and approval. We summarize the ICR below and describe the nature of the collection and the estimated burden and cost. This information collection is scheduled to expire on August 31, 2015. We may not conduct or sponsor and a person is not required to respond to a collection of information unless it displays a currently valid OMB control number. However, under OMB regulations, we may continue to conduct or sponsor this information collection while it is pending at OMB.

DATES: You must submit comments on or before **[INSERT DATE 30 DAYS AFTER DATE OF PUBLICATION IN THE FEDERAL REGISTER]**.

ADDRESSES: Send your comments and suggestions on this information collection to the Desk Officer for the Department of the Interior at OMB–OIRA at (202) 395–5806 (fax) or OIRA_Submission@omb.eop.gov (email). Please provide a copy of your comments to the Service Information Collection Clearance Officer, U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, MS BPHC, 5275 Leesburg Pike, Falls Church, VA 22041–3803 (mail), or hope_grey@fws.gov (email). Please include “1018–0119” in the subject line of your comments.

FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT: To request additional information about this ICR, contact Hope Grey at hope_grey@fws.gov (email) or 703–358–2482 (telephone). You may review the ICR online at <http://www.reginfo.gov>. Follow the instructions to review Department of the Interior collections under review by OMB.

SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION:

Information Collection Request

OMB Control Number: 1018–0119.

Title: Policy for Evaluation of Conservation Efforts When Making Listing Decisions (PECE).

Service Form Number: None.

Type of Request: Extension of a currently approved collection.

Description of Respondents: Primarily State, local, or tribal governments. However, individuals, businesses, and not-for-profit organizations could develop agreements/plans or may agree to implement certain conservation efforts identified in a State agreement/plan.

Respondent's Obligation: Required to obtain or retain a benefit.

Frequency of Collection: On occasion.

Estimated Annual Nonhour Burden Cost: None.

ACTIVITY	NUMBER OF RESPONDENTS	NUMBER OF RESPONSES	COMPLETION TIME PER RESPONSE	TOTAL ANNUAL BURDEN HOURS
Agreement	4	4	2,000	8,000
Monitoring	7	7	600	4,200
Reporting	7	7	120	840
TOTALS	18	18		13,040

Abstract: Section 4 of the Endangered Species Act (ESA) (16 U.S.C. 1531 et seq.) specifies the process by which we can list species as threatened or endangered. When we consider whether or not to list a species, the ESA requires us to take into account the efforts being made by any State or any political subdivision of a State to protect such species. We also take into account the efforts being made by other entities. States or other entities often formalize conservation efforts in conservation agreements, conservation plans, management plans, or similar documents. The conservation efforts recommended or called for in such documents could prevent some species from becoming so imperiled that they meet the definition of a threatened or endangered species under the ESA.

The Policy for Evaluation of Conservation Efforts When Making Listing Decisions (PECE) (68 FR 15100, March 28, 2003) encourages the development of conservation agreements/plans and provides certainty about the standard that an individual conservation effort must meet in order for us to consider whether it contributes to forming a basis for making a decision about the listing of a species. PECE applies to “formalized conservation efforts” that have not been implemented or have been implemented but have not yet demonstrated if they are effective at the time of a listing decision.

Under PECE, formalized conservation efforts are defined as conservation efforts (specific actions, activities, or programs designed to eliminate or reduce threats or otherwise improve the status of a species) identified in a conservation agreement, conservation plan, management plan, or similar document. To assist us in evaluating a formalized conservation effort under PECE, we collect information such as conservation plans, monitoring results, and progress reports. The development of such agreements/plans is voluntary. There is no requirement that the individual conservation efforts included in such documents be designed to meet the standard in PECE. The PECE policy is posted on our Candidate Conservation Web site at <http://www.fws.gov/endangered/esa-library/pdf/PECE-final.pdf>.

Comments Received and Our Responses

Comments: On June 19, 2015, we published in the Federal Register (80 FR 35391) a notice of our intent to request that OMB renew authority for this information collection. In that notice, we solicited public comments for 60 days, ending August 18, 2015. We did not receive any comments.

Request for Public Comments

We again invite comments concerning this information collection on:

- Whether or not the collection of information is necessary, including whether or not the information will have practical utility;
- The accuracy of our estimate of the burden for this collection of information;
- Ways to enhance the quality, utility, and clarity of the information to be collected; and

- Ways to minimize the burden of the collection of information on respondents.

Comments that you submit in response to this notice are a matter of public record. Before including your address, phone number, email address, or other personal identifying information in your comment, you should be aware that your entire comment, including your personal identifying information, may be made publicly available at any time. While you can ask OMB in your comment to withhold your personal identifying information from public review, we cannot guarantee that it will be done.

Dated: August 24, 2015

Tina A. Campbell,
Chief, Division of Policy, Performance, and Management Programs,
U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service.
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